

## **Congratulations to the 2017 Governor's EMS Award Winners!**

*By the virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:*

### **The Governor's EMS Award for Excellence in EMS**

#### **Bruce W. Edwards**



With nearly 50 years of devoted service, Bruce Edwards has dedicated his life and career to the improvement of prehospital emergency medical care and Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

He began as a volunteer with the Ocean Park Rescue Squad in 1967 and went on to build one of the most innovative and agile EMS systems in the country.

He has served as the executive director of the federally funded Emergency Coronary Care Program in Virginia Beach, which was the first all-volunteer program of its kind in the United States. He also served as a coordinator for the Office of Emergency Medical Services under the Executive Department of the City of Virginia Beach.

In 1984, a new Virginia Beach Department of EMS was created and Bruce Edwards was appointed as the department's first director. Commonly referred to as EMS Chief, Bruce led the organization through many significant changes over the years while maintaining the strength of the volunteer-based agency.

Upon his retirement in 2016 from the city, Bruce Edwards was named Chief Emeritus of Virginia Beach Department of EMS and remains an active volunteer paramedic.

In addition to his numerous leadership roles, Bruce also served two appointments on the State EMS Advisory Board. He was also the first person to be appointed to the newly created State Board of Health EMS Community Representative position in 2009, and was elected as chair of the Virginia State Board of Health in 2011.

Bruce Edwards' contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding EMS Administrator**

#### *The Kent J. Weber Trophy*

#### **Kevin Austin**



Kevin Austin has more than 25 years of outstanding service as an EMS provider in Virginia and more than 15 years of leadership success as the administrator of Abingdon Ambulance Service/C-Trans Medical Services, one of the largest agencies in the Commonwealth.

As Vice President of Operations, Kevin manages every aspect of the multi-site, professional EMS agency, which has experienced significant growth and expansion. Under his leadership the agency now responds to more than 38,000 calls per year, has experienced strategic growth into five localities within Southwest Virginia and has implemented continuous QA processes to ensure high standards of patient care.

He also built partnerships with the region's healthcare facilities, coalition members and local governments to meet the critical needs of the community.

Kevin Austin's significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Physician with Outstanding Contribution to EMS**

*The Frank M. Yeiser Trophy*

**Jeffrey D. Ferguson, M.D.**



Dr. Jeffrey Ferguson's wealth of knowledge and experience in EMS as an Operational Medical Director has allowed him to connect with members of Central Virginia's prehospital community, and also to become a trusted peer and mentor.

Dr. Ferguson currently serves as the Deputy Medical Director for Henrico County's Division of Fire, in addition to being a physician and associate professor of Emergency Medicine at VCU Medical Center. He is also leading efforts to offer an EMS Fellowship Program at VCU Medical Center, which will help prepare other physicians with the understanding necessary to maximize their individual impact on EMS agencies.

He has served on numerous state emergency medicine councils and performance improvement workgroups, including serving as the chair of the National Association of EMS Physicians' EMS Fellows Committee.

Dr. Jeffrey Ferguson's significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Nurse with Outstanding Contribution to EMS**

**June Leffke, R.N.**



June Leffke has dedicated more than 45 years of service to public safety in multiple professions, including providers, educators and registered nurses.

She has devoted much of her career to providing care to the ill and injured and has educated thousands of prehospital care providers in the Blue Ridge region and throughout the state.

In 2005, June received her certification as a Certified Flight Paramedic, Flight Nurse and Emergency Nurse, and is currently affiliated with Centra Health Inc.

In addition, June spends many hours teaching CPR classes in her local community of Bedford County and spends two weeks every year serving on medical missions, helping children and adults from third world countries get the health care they need.

June Leffke's significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding EMS Prehospital Educator**

### **Donna M. Galganski-Pabst**



Throughout her career, Donna Galganski-Pabst has shown great passion and enthusiasm for EMS education and goes above and beyond to ensure that her students have the foundation necessary to be successful and competent providers.

Donna is the primary EMS educator for James City Fire Department, she volunteers for York County Department of Fire and Life Safety and also works with the Tidewater Community College EMS program. She teaches for both the Hampton Division of Fire and Rescue and the Newport News Fire Department.

Donna is an active member of the Virginia EMS Symposium Program Committee and serves as an instructor for other organizations such as the American Heart Association and the National Association of EMTs.

Donna Galganski-Pabst's significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued by the

Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding EMS Prehospital Provider**

### **Benjamin R. Bond**



Benjamin Bond's passion for EMS and helping others began at the age of 16 when he joined the Amherst Life Saving Crew, serving as a volunteer alongside his father.

Ben later went on to become a member of Campbell County Public Safety and was promoted to captain of the agency.

In 2017, he accepted a full-time flight paramedic position with Centra Health's Air Medical Service - Centra One, in addition to serving as an adjunct faculty with the Central Virginia Community College, where he instructs first year paramedic students.

As a health care professional, Ben possesses the ability to understand and to be sensitive of the challenges that his patients and colleagues experience. He is able to respond to intense situations with patience and precision, putting both his patients and coworkers at ease.

Benjamin Bond's significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued by the Commonwealth of Virginia.



## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding Contribution to EMS Health and Safety**

### **Ellen G. Vest**



Ellen Vest has served as a member of the Peninsulas Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team for more than 30 years and currently serves as the team coordinator.

Her leadership, care, maintenance and support of the dedicated group of volunteer mental health professionals has aided them in serving hundreds of first responders, and contributed substantially to the mental health of EMS providers in the Peninsulas EMS region.

Ellen has been active in CISM throughout the Commonwealth, serving on statewide committees, presenting courses at various conferences and serving as an advocate for good mental health of EMS providers statewide.

She instills the importance of “taking care of yourself” to all of her students, from EMTs to Paramedics. Ellen Vest’s significant contributions to Virginia’s local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding Contribution to EMS for Children**

### **Far Southwest Healthcare Coalition**



From 2013-2017, each hospital in the region completed a Quality Improvement Emergency Department Assessment that helped to identify the pediatric needs in the area. As a result of the assessment and through collaboration with the state EMS for Children program, the group worked to bring together various stakeholders, identified specific needs and developed a plan to meet those needs.

Through the efforts of the coalition, all emergency departments in the region now have dedicated emergency carts stocked with supplies needed for all age groups. Each hospital has also developed a Quality Plan, with a main focus on emergency care to the pediatric patient.

The assessment and planning process has raised awareness for the special needs of a pediatric patient and has enabled a higher level of monitoring and ongoing improvement. The coalition focused on making sure all hospitals in the region were provided the resources identified through the assessment and continue to provide education to meet the needs of the children. The next phase of the pediatric project will focus on prehospital care and EMS response and transport.

The Far Southwest Healthcare Coalition’s significant contributions to Virginia’s local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly appreciated by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding EMS Agency Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad**



The Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad is an all-volunteer prehospital emergency medical and technical rescue organization, with approximately 200 active volunteers and a call volume of over 3,000 calls per year.

The agency is actively involved in numerous community activities and outreach initiatives aimed at improving the health and quality of life for its residents.

In addition to the traditional EMS coverage, Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad provides a wide range of technical rescue services to the community, and strives to maintain the highest level of patient care through ongoing training, research and quality improvement.

The Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad's significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding Contribution to EMS Telecommunication Cindy Gillespie**



Cindy Gillespie began her career as a telecommunicator in 1997, and has worked her way up to Powhatan County's Public-Safety Answering Point Manager.

Her dedication to public safety is shown through her continuous efforts in gaining knowledge and advancing her skills to improve the telecommunications system.

Under her leadership, Cindy successfully implemented the Association of Public Communications Officials-International (APCO) EMS protocol and made sure that each communications officer completed the required training, passed the tests and understood how to apply the APCO protocols to actual 911 emergency medical calls.

Her commitment for advancement greatly improved the quality of the system and the services provided to the community. Cindy Gillespie's dedication and significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly appreciated by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding Contribution to EMS Emergency Preparedness and Response**

*The James A. Nogle, Jr. Trophy*

### **LifeCare Medical Transports**



LifeCare Medical Transports was founded 22 years ago by two EMS volunteers with a mission to provide medical transportation services to the Fredericksburg region. Since then, LifeCare has become the go-to provider of specialty EMS services throughout Virginia and the country.

The agency is committed to excellence in emergency response and preparedness, and has supported the medical and transport needs of those impacted by major events. LifeCare was the first crew to respond on-scene during the 9/11 attacks in D.C., and they have sent ambulances to respond during Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy. They also partnered with Virginia hospitals to provide specialized transport services for patients diagnosed with, or suspected of, carrying the Ebola virus.

With staffed ambulances working throughout Virginia on a daily basis, LifeCare has collaborated with jurisdictions to serve as a backup for their 911 systems and have provided reassurance to those areas in the event of a major disaster.

LifeCare Medical Transports' significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

An additional award is presented at the ceremony to recognize the outstanding contributions to EMS by a high school senior. This is a scholarship award presented by the State EMS Advisory Board.

## **The Governor's EMS Award for Outstanding Contribution to EMS by a High School Senior**

*The Dr. Carol Gilbert \$5,000 Scholarship*

### **Jacob Wellerman**



Jacob Wellerman takes great pride in knowing that as an EMS provider he is truly making a difference in someone else's life.

As a high school senior, Jacob volunteered with the Chancellor Volunteer Fire and Rescue in Spotsylvania while maintaining a 4.1 GPA and participating in multiple extracurricular activities.

He currently attends Mary Washington Honors College, and after a year he plans to transfer to Cornell University, before attending medical school. His goal is to one day become a General Surgeon.

If given the chance to change one thing about the EMS system in Virginia, Jacob said that he would work to improve the relationship between career and volunteer providers.

Jacob Wellerman's contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state EMS system are exceptional and greatly valued by the Commonwealth of Virginia.